

# Sentence Diagramming

*Kaitlyn Hlywa*

**Grade level:** 7

**Anticipated time:** 6 class periods

**Beginning Date:** Monday, October 1, 2012

**End Date:** Monday, October 8, 2012

**Class time:** 40 minutes

**Time/method for student practice:**

- For each class period, 15 minutes will be used to teach.
- 25 minutes will be used for class work with teacher assistance. This time can also be used to address any of the students' questions.

**English proficiency levels:**

- Mixed class of native English speakers and about 1/3 of English language learners.
- ELLs are at the intermediate level.
- \*Note: Because students are in grade 7, they should already be familiar with the concepts of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, as well as how to write sentences. The purpose of this unit is to take what they know, and build new knowledge, enhancing their ability to identify the different parts of speech in a sentence.

**Lesson Overview (Theme and Purpose):**

- Reinforce definitions and uses of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.
- Learn how to diagram sentences for an understanding of the relationships between words.
- Reinforce the previously learned material of the unit.
- Take acquired information and apply it to a diagram for a deeper analysis
- Gain a better understanding of the parts of speech.

**Goals:** Students will learn how to sentence diagram. They will be able to make clear distinctions between subjects, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

**The Bigger Picture:**

- Diagramming is very helpful, especially when learning a second language.
- Diagramming allows readers to gain a better understanding of the sentences' meanings.
- Example: when reading in a different language, visualizing a sentence diagram can help the reader locate the subject and the verb, and then the rest of the sentence.

## Supplementary Materials

These materials will be referenced throughout the lesson plan.

### Grammar Textbook:

- Use corresponding pages of *Basic Grammar in Use* in conjunction with the day's lesson.
- The textbook does not incorporate diagramming: the students will diagram the sentences as a part of their homework.
- Depending on the directions provided in the textbook, the assignment may need to be revised so that it is appropriate for the students' levels.
- Exercises will reinforce the lesson.
- \*When underlining: Not all sentences will have adjectives or adverbs. I want my students to not only recognize when there is an adjective or adverb, but also when there isn't one.
- Thoroughly explain all homework assignments to be sure that the students understand.
- If necessary, set time aside to review with the English Language Learners.

I've never incorporated a textbook into a lesson plan before, and after looking over *Basic Grammar in Use*, I struggled to fit it into the lesson plan. Rather than using the textbook to guide my teaching, I will use it to complement my teaching, mainly for exercises and practice. Even if a textbook works really well with a lesson, I would still probably only use it as a supplement. I like being able to make my own decisions in the classroom, and I don't want to feel limited. If I focus too much on the text, it will be very difficult to break away from the textbook format. I would end up struggling, trying to build my lesson around the book rather than the material I feel is important for the students to learn. Most of my lessons will come from my ideas and experience, rather than from a book in my classroom. The book won't know my students; I will. Since this text is normally used for a younger grade, the material within it is too easy for the students. Therefore, it is only a supplement. The exercises will be revised to better suit my students' needs.

Smalzer, William R. *Basic Grammar in Use*. 3rd ed. Cambridge University Press, 1993. Print.

### Visuals: Colored Flashcards (8½ x 11)

- Three flashcards for identifying adjectives: "which one?" "what kind?" and "how many?"
  - Four flashcards for identifying adverbs: "when?" "where?" "how?" and "to what extent?"
- Students will give examples for each question
- Adjectives: "Which one? *That* one," "What kind? The *blue* kind," "How many? *Two*."
  - Adverbs: "How did he run? He ran *quickly*," "Where did he go? He went *there*," etc.
  - Why: Many students are visual learners and learn best through repetition. Flashcards will help students visualize the questions adjectives and adverbs should answer. Because they are different colors, they will capture the attention of the students.
  - Purpose: Students will be able to better recall the questions to identify adjectives and adverbs because the flashcards stand out specifically in their memories. When teaching about adjectives and adverbs, the flashcards will be used with repetition so that students will be able to remember the necessary questions when identifying these parts of speech.

**Books: (“Look and Find”)**

- Source: home, classroom provided texts available
- Purpose: Give students the opportunity to practice diagramming simple sentences and reinforce what the students are learning and will be tested on.
- Students will be given time in class to use these books and can work in groups.
- Find examples of these sentences:
  1. Subject
  2. Subject + Verb
  3. Subject + Verb + Adjective
  4. Subject + Verb + AdverbExtra Credit: Subject + Verb + Adjective + Adverb
- Why: Diagramming from a novel or book demonstrates how words come together to form an overall understanding in creating a story. A textbook does not necessarily have the same capability in creating a storyline, showing how words can work together.
- Purpose: Reinforce each day’s lesson. When both the subject and the verb are learned, students will focus on diagramming only the subject and the verb so that they can master identifying these two elements of a sentence. As the week progresses and different parts of a sentence are learned, they will gradually be added to the sentence diagram.

**Parts of Speech chart:**

- Hand out on the first day of the new unit.
- Purpose: Have students use it as an outline for the upcoming lessons and as part of the study guide for the unit test.

**Possessive Pronouns Chart:**

- Hand out when learning about adjectives.
- Purpose: How possessive pronouns relate to subjects and how they describe nouns.

**Adverb Chart:**

- Hand out when learning about adverbs.
- Purpose: How adverbs relate to verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

**Key Unit Vocabulary:**

- *Subject* - the “doer” of the verb; noun that tells whom or what the sentence is about
- *Verb* – describes an action, state, or occurrence
- *Adjective* – describes only nouns
- *Adverb* – describes verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs

## Review and Assessment

These materials will be referenced throughout the lesson plan.

### Board Work:

- Students will spend 5 minutes coming up with their own unique sentences
- Students will diagram the parts that are relevant to the current lesson.
- I will choose students to come up, share one of their sentences with the class, and then diagram on the board the parts of speech that have been learned thus far.
- Encourage peer feedback so that all students can learn from this activity.
- Why: Many students enjoy showing off what they know. I will give them this opportunity but also incorporate peer interaction. They can both teach other students and get peer feedback. Everyone will be learning through this process, but it will be through the students themselves rather than through the teacher. Be aware of the students' different reactions and interpretations of feedback.
- Purpose: allow students to gain self-confidence in their work and to have the opportunity to learn from others.

### Review Game:

- Use as part of the day's lesson or as a review for the upcoming test.
- Play "Around the World" with the different parts of speech.
- At one end of the room, 2 students stand up. I ask a question about a part of speech
- The first of the two students to answer the teacher's question will move on to the next student and another question will be asked.
- Activity continues until it is time to stop. Students who are not "competing" should write the answer down for their own benefit.
- This can be used at any point during the unit (modify for the day's lesson) or can be used as a review for the unit test.
- Why: Kids love competitive games, and this will provide them an opportunity to incorporate competition with the lesson while learning at the same time.
- Purpose: Bring fun into the classroom.
- Goal: Bring motivation, energy, and fun into the classroom.

### Adjectives and Adverbs:

- Have students repeat "which one, what kind, how many?" for adjectives and "when, where, how, to what extent?" for adverbs.
- Why: Oral repetition will help the students encode these questions for the identification of certain parts of speech. Repetition will be used so that these questions can easily be recalled when necessary.
- Purpose: Move these questions to the students' long-term memories.

### Reflections:

What have we learned this unit?

We have learned the definitions of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

We have connected them to everyday sentences, identifying the parts of speech of each word.

After identifying the parts of speech of words, we can now diagram different sentences.

**Quiz:**

- A simple quiz over subjects, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.
- Grade together in class and use as a study guide for the test.

**Unit Test:**

- Covers the material learned in class.
- Includes definitions of subject, verb, adjective, and adverb, as well as their different uses and other important information addressed in the lessons.
- Have students diagram sentences.
- Extra credit: write the questions used to identify adjectives and adverbs.
- Purpose: The material was learned well enough to move on to the next unit.
- How: No multiple choice or true and false questions will be used. I want to know how much the student has learned, and that cannot be achieved with these questions. There will be short answers, fill in the blanks, diagramming, and other forms of testing. The questions will be clear-cut and relevant to what was taught.
- Be sure to review the tests with the students after they have been graded so that they understand how to correct their mistakes.

# Lesson Plan

Week 1: Oct 1-5

Day 1: Subjects

## Journal Activity:

- Ask students to think about their favorite movie or book character.
- Have them write descriptions of these characters in their journals. These should include their physical characteristics as well as what they do.
- Have students share with a partner. Select a few students to share with the class.
- Why: Have students start thinking about how words work together to serve a particular purpose. This introduces the use of subjects (their choice of character), adjectives (their descriptions), verbs (what they do), and adverbs if present. None of these statements could have been possible without the use of these different parts of speech.
- Purpose: Introduce the practicality of English grammar. The students will begin to understand and learn that every word has a specific purpose in a sentence, whether it is the subject, the verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

Pass out: “Parts of Speech” chart

## Different Functions of a Noun:

- Definition: a person, place, thing, or idea.
- Function: often associated with that of a subject, but can have other functions

## Definition of a Subject:

- Definition: the agent of the action expressed by the verb; usually appears before the verb.
- Definition: a noun or pronoun that tells whom or what the sentence is about.
- Complete subject: an expansion of a noun, including the noun’s adjectives and its prepositional phrases.
- Learning how to identify a subject is important in order for us to know who or what the sentence is about.

## Grammar Textbook:

Unit 3: “I am doing” (present continuous); focus on subjects.

Introduction:

Who is “doing” the action verb? Underline the subjects.

She’s eating. It’s raining. They’re running.

Part A:

Gives a list of personal pronouns (will be included on Unit Test)

Underline subjects in examples

Part B:

Underline subjects in examples

\*Note: Introduce imperative sentences: Subject (you) is implied

\*Note: Spend time on sentence inversions (questions): How do you identify the subject?

\*Spelling can be ignored – students should already know this but can use it as a reference

Exercises:

- 3.1 Rewrite exercise: Create a worksheet for the students. Instead of having a word box with verbs, keep the verbs and have the subjects in the word box instead.
- 3.2 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the subjects.
- 3.3 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the subjects.

Supplementary Materials: See “Books” #1

Review/Assessment: See “Board Work”  
See “Review Game” if there is time

## Day 2: Verbs

### Definition of a Verb:

- Definition: a word that identifies action, state, or occurrence of a sentence.
- Relationship between the subject and the verb are crucial in identifying all the other aspects of a sentence.
- It is important to be able to identify the verb and the entity that makes the verb happen.

### Grammar Textbook: Unit 4: “Are you –ing?” (present continuous questions); focus on verbs

#### Introduction:

Charts on constructing present progressive (will be included on Unit Test)

What is the action verb? Underline the verbs

Are you feeling all right? Is it raining? Why are you wearing a coat?

Introduce helping verbs and being verbs

#### Exercises:

4.1-4.2 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the verbs (including helping verbs)

4.3-4.4 Follow the directions. Add: Underline verbs in Q&A (including helping verbs)

Appendix 1: List of irregular verbs (Have students use as a reference)

Appendix 2: Irregular verbs in groups (Have students use as a reference)

### Diagramming Subjects and Verbs:

- Locate the verb. In “My dog ran quickly,” Identify the action that is occurring. “Ran” is the action; therefore, it is the verb.
- What about verbs like “is” and “were”? These are called “being” or “linking” verbs because they “link” the subject to an adjective.
- Next, identify the subject, or the “doer” of the verb which is the subject. “Dog” is the subject.
- Sentence diagramming: First, draw a horizontal line on the paper. On top of the line, write “dog” as the subject and “ran” as the verb. Then, draw a vertical line going through the horizontal line to separate the subject and the verb (Figure 1). These are the most basic, and most important components of sentence diagramming.

### Supplementary Materials: See “Books” #2

### Review/Assessment: See “Board Work”

See “Review Game” if there is time



### Day 3: Adjectives

#### Definition of Adjectives:

- Definition: describe and modify only nouns
- Answer the questions “which one?” “what kind?” and “how many?”
- (Recall: Adjectives also include articles “a”, “an”, and “the”).

Pass out: “Possessive Pronouns” Chart

#### Grammar Textbook:

Unit 5: “I do/work/have, etc.” (simple present); focus on adjectives

Introduction:

Underline all of the adjectives.

They have a lot of books. They read a lot.

She’s eating an ice cream cone. She likes ice cream cones.

\*Note: Introduce Articles (a, an, the)

\*Note: Nouns can be used as adjectives (ex: ice cream)

Part A:

Section can be ignored – students should already know this but can use it as a reference

Part B:

Label adjectives in examples

Part C:

Skip for now but refer back to during adverbs.

Exercises:

5.1 Follow the directions. Add: Write sentences with adjectives and underline them

5.2 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the adjectives (not present in all sentences).

5.3 Skip for now but refer back to during adverbs

#### Diagramming Adjectives:

- In “My dog ran quickly,” “my” is the adjective.
- To label adjectives, place the adjective on a slanted line underneath the noun it is describing. As a result, “my” goes underneath “dog” (Figure 2).

Supplementary Materials: See “Visuals” and “Books” #3

Review/Assessment: See “Adjectives and Adverbs”

See “Board Work”

See “Review Game” if there is time

## Day 4: Adverbs

### Definition of Adverbs:

- Definition: describe adjectives, verbs, and other adverbs.
- Answer the questions “when?” “where?” “how?” and “to what extent?”
- Most adverbs end in “-ly”.

### Grammar Textbook:

Unit 5: “I do/work/have, etc.” (simple present); focus on adverbs

Part C:

Underline all of the adverbs.

Exercises:

5.3 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the adverbs.

Unit 6: “I don’t...” (negative simple present); focus on adverbs

Parts A-B:

\*Note: “not” is an adverb.

Underline all of the adverbs.

For example sentences, add adverbs and underline them.

I drink coffee carefully, but I don’t drink tea carefully.

We don’t know very many people in this town.

Exercises:

6.1 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the adverbs.

6.2 Follow the directions. Add: Underline adverbs.

6.3 Do not assign: Difficult to use adverbs with “like”; does not reinforce lesson

6.4 Follow the directions. Add: Underline the adverbs.

### Diagramming Adverbs:

- Adverbs have the same exact format as adjectives.
- Only difference: adverbs are placed underneath the corresponding adjective, verb, or adverb in which the adverb describes. (Adjectives can only be placed underneath nouns.)
- In “My dog ran quickly,” “quickly” is the adverb because it describes how the dog ran. Therefore, “quickly” is put underneath “ran” (Figure 3).

Supplementary Materials: See “Visuals” and “Books” #4

Review and Assessment: See “Adjectives and Adverbs”

See “Board Work”

See “Review Game” if there is time

**Day 5: Mini-Quiz and Review**

Pass out: Quiz: subjects, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs

Pass out: Study guide

Supplementary Materials: See “Visuals” and “Books: Extra Credit”

Review and Assessment: See “Adjectives and Adverbs”  
See “Board Work”  
See “Review Game” if there is time

**Week 2: Oct 8**

**Day 6: Diagramming Test**

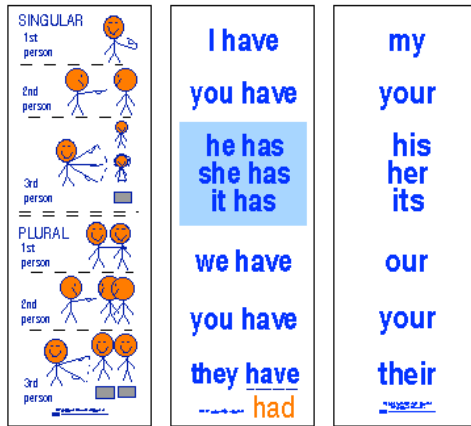
Pass Out: Unit Test

## Parts of Speech Chart

<b>Noun</b> Names a person, place, thing, or idea. A noun can be a proper noun or a common noun	<b>Pronoun</b> Replaces a person, place, thing, or idea. Pronouns can act as subjects or objects, and some can show possession	<b>Verb</b> Shows action or that indicates a condition or a state of being
<b>Adjective</b> Describes or modifies a noun or a pronoun. An adjective describes "which one," "what kind," or "how many"		<b>Adverb</b> Describes or modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. An adverb describes when, where, how, or to what extent

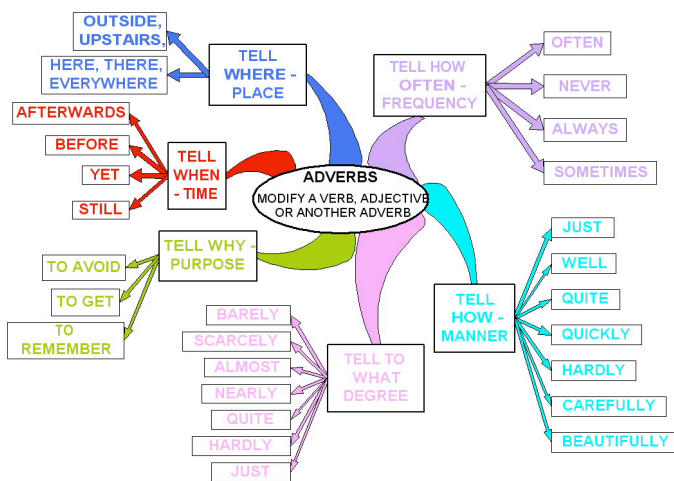
### Adjectives: Possessive pronouns

<http://teacher-oseias-alves.blogspot.com/2011/09/possessive-pronouns.html>



### Adverbs:

<http://mappio.com/mindmap/gillianmarie/adverbs>

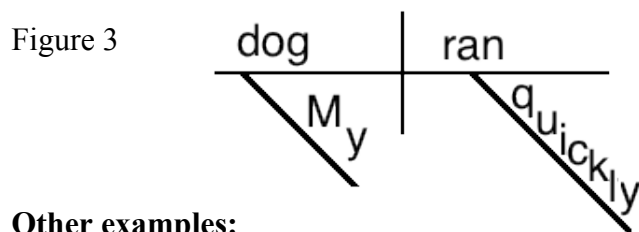
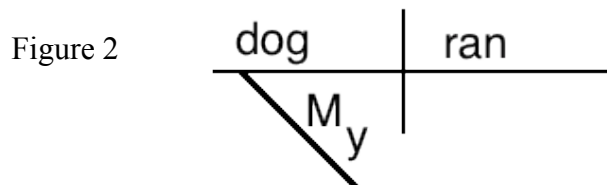
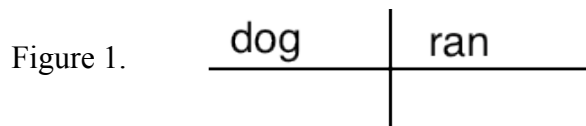


# Constructing a Sentence Diagram

## To be done together in class – building a sentence

- This sentence will be on the board throughout the unit.
- Diagram each part of speech on the board as it is learned until the unit is done and the sentence has a complete diagram.
- Purpose: to provide a model for scaffolding.
- Why: Since the sentence and the learned parts of speech are displayed on the board, students can easily refer to it throughout the class period when doing the lesson's activities. Scaffolding will occur as they see the teacher complete the model and then be able to diagram on their own.

**Sentence:** My dog ran quickly.



## Other examples:

1. Subject and verb:
  - a. I ate.
  - b. I | ate
  - c. I am eating.
  - d. I | am eating
2. Adjectives
  - a. My friend sings.
  - b. friend | sings  
My
3. Adverbs
  - a. My friend sings quietly.
  - b. friend | sings  
My softly

## Preparation:

(What you reviewed, difficulties or frustrations, how comfortable and knowledgeable you feel)

When I started preparing for this lesson plan, my first and most important goal was to make sure that the lesson would be comprehensible to the students. If I finish the lesson, and my students do not understand at least a majority of it, I fail at teaching them. Therefore, I incorporated several supplementary materials and different forms of review and assessment. With the supplementary materials, I provide visuals and hands-on “mini-projects” for the students to partake in. With the different forms of review and assessments, if there is a mistake, I can catch it there and then, rather than waiting until the unit exam to find out that a student did not fully understand a concept.

Once it was time to create the lesson plan, I thought back to when I was a student learning these concepts. In middle school, my teacher’s bright, colored flashcards helped me tremendously. They were a visual aid that helped with repetition. Another activity that helped me was when we used simple storybooks. When I took Spanish grammar in college, my teacher had us use simple elementary books to depict verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc. Last but not least, because I’m a visual person, I like things organized into categories. If I need to refer back to something, I don’t want to swim through words to find what I’m looking for. Therefore, I added three charts for my students’ benefit: the Parts of Speech chart, the Possessive Pronouns chart, and the Adverb chart.

I was frustrated that I couldn’t include everything that I had initially planned. Ideally, I would have included direct objects, indirect objects, infinitives, and gerunds so that I could incorporate more concepts into the sentence diagramming. After thinking about it for a while, I realized that it’s almost always better to start simple and then build up. If I focus only on subjects, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, the students will have these concepts down solid when they start to learn the more complex parts of grammar. Rather than learning everything at once, they will already be able to identify key words, allowing them to focus more on the difficult grammar. I feel very comfortable and knowledgeable on my grammar topic. Though these concepts are taught in elementary school, it is important to continue building on new information. By adding the sentence diagramming, the students can use this unit as both a review and as a new learning experience.

Additional information:

There are four key points we must remember in order to teach effectively.

- Students do not learn structures one at a time.
- Teachers should not be afraid of when students regress, backslide, or overgeneralize.
- Teachers should remember that language learners rely on previous knowledge.
- Different learning processes lead to different language aspects.

Even though watching a student regress can be discouraging, the student is still learning. Instead of worrying about the learning process, teachers should stay calm and teach the exceptions when they feel the students are ready. I hope that my students do not struggle in this unit. If they do, I expect it to be with the diagramming, not the information presented. The time given for classwork can also be used to address any questions the students have regarding the lessons.

There are two concepts I'd like to emphasize in this lesson plan:

- Enhancing the input is when a teacher focuses on one grammatical structure and makes it more noticeable to increase noticing. For example, a teacher can take a reading and highlight all of the simple past tense structures so that the student can recognize them more easily. In this lesson plan, I encourage the *students* to enhance the input by underlining. Rather than having me underline for them, they have to make the conscious effort to underline, allowing them to actively look for the parts of speech.
- Collaborative dialogue is when students work together to provide each other feedback. By correcting each other's mistakes, they both reinforce their own knowledge as well as fixing their errors. These concepts should improve the learning experience for my students.

## The Atlantic: “The Writing Revolution”

“The Writing Revolution” in *The Atlantic* gives an account of how English grammar is crucial to education. Monica DiBella, a public high school student on Staten Island, New York, gives her account of the struggles she faced throughout her educational career. After over 100 hours of tutoring, Monica felt comfortable with math and reading, but her grades, along with many other students’ were still well below average. These poor grades were a cause of a 4 in 10 dropout rate, something that the teachers had to fix.

The Writing Revolution began when the teachers realized that a lack of writing skills caused the poor grades. The article states, “Students’ inability to translate thoughts into coherent, well-argued sentences, paragraphs, and essays was severely impeding intellectual growth in many subjects” (1). The students may understand the material, but if they cannot express it in writing, they cannot prove they know the material. Before the revolution, writing was assumed to be “caught, not taught” (3). If this is true, then a student’s writing improves each time they write. This is a false belief, however, because even though some students catch quite a bit, they cannot catch it all, and many other students catch much less. The Writing Revolution made the teaching of writing explicit so that students knew what to use and how to use it. Classrooms had posters with “formulas” for students to use when answering questions such as “Although...”, “Unless...”, and “If...”, and with this instruction, “nearly every instructional hour except for math class was dedicated to teaching essay writing along with a particular subject” (4).

This article gives a wonderful demonstration of the importance of grammar. If students master grammar, they can master any subject. If they can master any subject, they will succeed. The article states, “As her understanding of the parts of speech grew, Monica’s reading comprehension improved dramatically” (5). It is not enough to have a dictionary of words next to you. Not only do you have to know the definition, but you also have to know how to use them. Without the latter, the words are meaningless. It’s depressing that grammar isn’t taught in many schools these days. As Hochman mentions, “kids need a formula” to understand writing (4). Without this formula, students will not have a foundation to grow on. The formula also shows the different importances present within the same sentence. If there is a dependent clause, that information is less important, but still worth telling, than the independent clause. In addition, conjunctions combine sentences to change how they are read. “And” is used when combining two important ideas, “but” shows a contradiction, and “or” gives options. Without these simple words, these constructions could not be made. Therefore, the formulas assist in both teaching and writing.

If we take Diane Larsen-Freeman’s ideas and relate them to the article, there is a strong correlation between grammar and success. She speaks of a 3-dimensional grammar framework, which includes form, meaning, and use. Form is the fundamental structure of a language, usually what is taught in a typical grammar textbook. Meaning often deals with dictionary definitions (lexicon). Use is often discussed in relation to context and situations. Students may understand meaning and use, but if they cannot express these ideas in the correct form, the meaning and use have no significance: they are not conveyed in a comprehensible manner. This was the issue the students had on Staten Island. They knew the material but had no way of showing it. If they had the initial grammar foundation, their writing would have successfully allowed them to communicate their class material.



I love writing fun, lengthy sentences. I can do this because I was taught grammar in middle school, a time when I was learning my style of writing. When students are not taught this, they never get the opportunity to create these fun sentences. Instead, they write short, choppy sentences because they are unaware of their options. If teachers make grammar a priority and integrate it in every classroom, students will not only learn more, but their voices will be heard through writing.